



SPAWN[®]

HINE
HABERLIN

A TALE OF THREE BROTHERS
PART FOUR: SECRETS AND LIES



ISSUE 173 DIGITAL EDITION

SPAWN.COM

Capullo 7

TODD MCFARLANE AND
IMAGE COMICS PRESENT

STORY
DAVID HINE

PENCILS AND INKS
BRIAN HABERLIN

LETTERING
TOM ORZECOWSKI

COLOR
ANDY TROY

PRODUCTION
FRANCIS TAKENAGA
DIANA SANSON

ASSISTANT EDITOR
FRANCIS TAKENAGA

COVER
GREG CAPULLO

PREVIOUSLY IN SPAWN:

Al Simmons was a hit man for the US government until a treacherous assassin ended his life. At the moment of death, Al was offered a deal by the demon Malebolgia and returned to Earth as Spawn, a creature with supernatural powers born in Hell.

As Armageddon consumed the world, Spawn turned against his masters, destroying all life on Earth. While God and Satan continue their endless conflict in a parallel universe, Spawn has re-created the world and resurrected the human race, in what has become known as the White Light. The portals to Heaven and Hell are closed, leaving humanity free from the influence of angels and demons.

Now the cracks in Spawn's brave new world are showing. The demons Ab and Zab, trapped on Earth after the White Light, have taken over a fundamentalist Christian hell house theatre and opened a portal to a backwater of Hell. Now the evil is spilling out in the form of sin-eaters, creatures who gorge themselves on the guilt of their human victims.

It turns out the preacher who runs the hell house is Al's youngest brother, Richard, and the sin-eater has resurrected long buried memories. Since they were children, a mysterious man in white was a malevolent influence in the lives of the three Simmons brothers, appearing whenever their father was away from home.

Marc distrusted the man called Malefick from the start, but Al was fascinated by his aura of evil. In the end, it was Richie who proved the weakest. Malefick used the temptations of drugs and women to make Richard his puppet, setting him up to stab the depraved dealer known as The Weasel.

When Al saw what his brother had done, he made a decision that would save them from prison and destroy their lives. He took the knife and kept on stabbing The Weasel until he was dead.

Then Malefick knew that Al Simmons was the one he had been searching for through the centuries. The one who was destined to become the creature known as Spawn.

MANAGING EDITORS
JENNIFER CASSIDY
TYLER JEFFERS

SPAWN EDITORS
BRIAN HABERLIN
TODD MCFARLANE

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
OF SPAWN.COM
TYLER JEFFERS

MANAGER OF
INT'L. PUBLISHING
FOR TMP
SUZY THOMAS

PUBLISHER FOR
IMAGE COMICS
ERIC STEPHENSON

SPAWN CREATED BY
TODD MCFARLANE

DEDICATED TO
KYLE BAKER



TODD MCFARLANE
PRODUCTIONS
SPAWN.COM



Spawn #173, Digital Edition. Published by IMAGE COMICS, 1942 University Ave. Berkeley, CA 94704. Spawn, its logo and its symbol are registered trademarks © 2008 Todd McFarlane Productions, Inc. All other related characters are TM and © 2008 Todd McFarlane Productions, Inc. All rights reserved. The characters, events and stories in this publication are entirely fictional. With exception of artwork used for review purposes, none of the contents of this publication may be reprinted without the permission of Todd McFarlane Productions, Inc.



I ALWAYS BELIEVED THAT BEFORE I DIED AND BECAME A HELLSPAWN, I WAS A GOOD PERSON. NOT A SAINT, BUT DEFINITELY ONE OF THE GOOD GUYS.

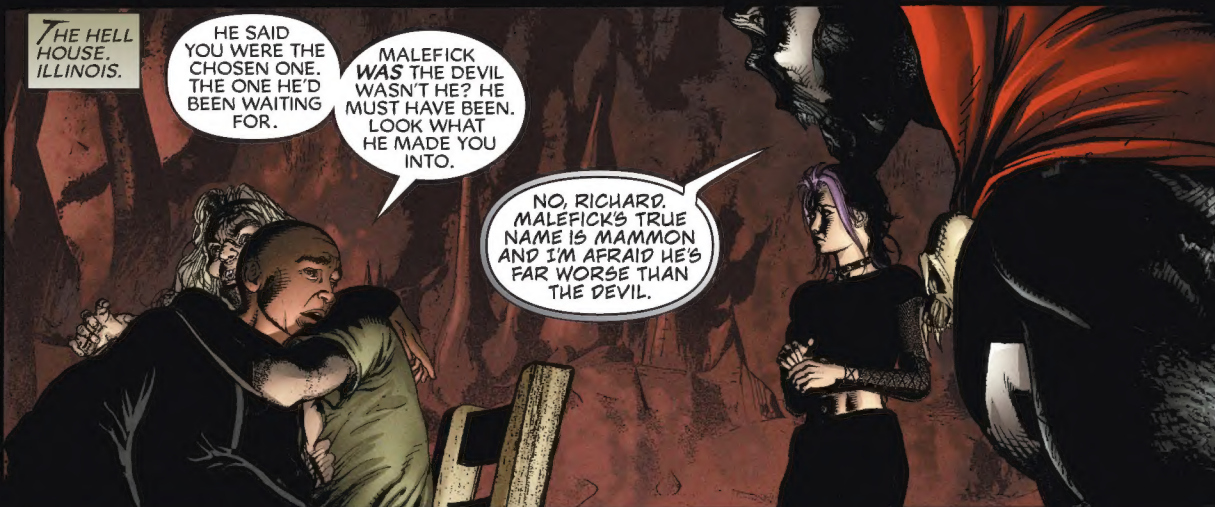
THAT'S WHAT KEPT ME SANE.

BUT EVERYTHING I DISCOVER ABOUT MYSELF TELLS ME I'M WRONG. ALL MY MEMORIES WERE FALSE.

I ABUSED WANDA...



...AND WHEN I WAS NINETEEN YEARS OLD, I COMMITTED COLD-BLOODED MURDER.



THE HELL HOUSE, ILLINOIS.

HE SAID YOU WERE THE CHOSEN ONE. THE ONE HE'D BEEN WAITING FOR.

MALEFICK WAS THE DEVIL WASN'T HE? HE MUST HAVE BEEN. LOOK WHAT HE MADE YOU INTO.

NO, RICHARD. MALEFICK'S TRUE NAME IS MAMMON AND I'M AFRAID HE'S FAR WORSE THAN THE DEVIL.



IT'S MY FAULT THIS HAPPENED TO YOU. HE USED ME TO GET TO YOU. HE KNEW I WAS WEAK.

YESSSSS. THE GUILT ISSSSS ALL YOURSSSSS.

AL, THAT CREATURE IS KILLING YOUR BROTHER! I'M GOING TO STOP THIS NOW!

REVEAL YOUR TRUE FORM!



JUSSST A
LITTLE
MORRRRE

PLEASE,
DON'T STOP IT.
THIS IS NOT AN
EVIL CREATURE. IT'S
ABSOVING ME.
I CAN FEEL MY
SINS WASHING
AWAY.

THAT'S
ENOUGH!
LET HIM
GO!



THE LUSH AROMA
OF EVIL ISSS ON YOUR BREATH
HELLSSPAWN. YOU HAVE COMMITTED
EVERY VILE ACT THE HUMAN MIND
CAN IMAGINE, BUT I TELL
YOU THISSSS...

...YOUR
GREATEST
SIN IS YET
TO COME.

SO
YOU TELL
FORTUNES
TOO?



DID
YOU SEE
THIS
COMING!?



HOW
IS HE?

WEAK.
THAT THING
SUCKED ALL THE
ENERGY OUT OF HIM.
I CAN FEEL HIS
HEART FLUTTERING
LIKE A TRAPPED
BIRD.

I'LL NEED
TO CAST A
HEALING
SPELL.



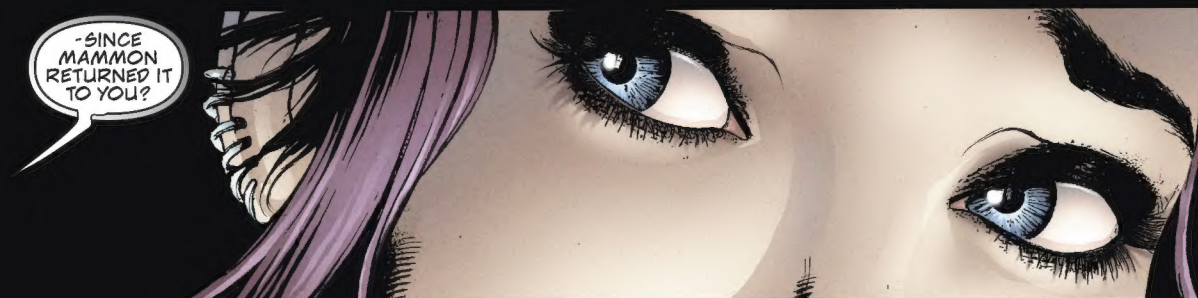
BLESSED ACHELOIS, I SUMMON THEE,
FROM THE SHADOWS OF THE NIGHT,
TRANSFORM THIS SPIRIT'S DARKEST HOUR
INTO PUREST HEALING LIGHT.
BY THE POWER OF THE LADY,
BY THE POWER OF THE THREE,
AS I DO WILL IT, SO MOTE IT BE

HAA-A-A-H-H-H

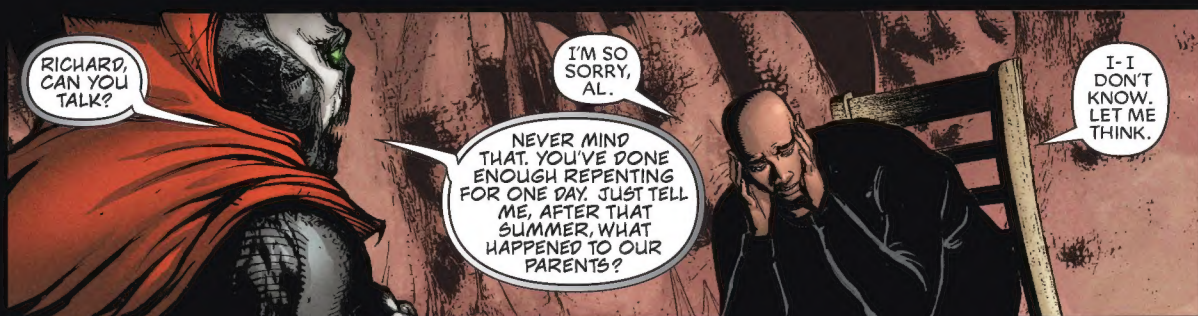


WHAT
HAPPENED TO
THE CANDLES
AND
POTIONS?

I-- I DON'T
NEED THEM. MY
MAGICK IS
BECOMING MORE
POTENT ALL THE
TIME SINCE-



-SINCE
MAMMON
RETURNED IT
TO YOU?



RICHARD,
CAN YOU
TALK?

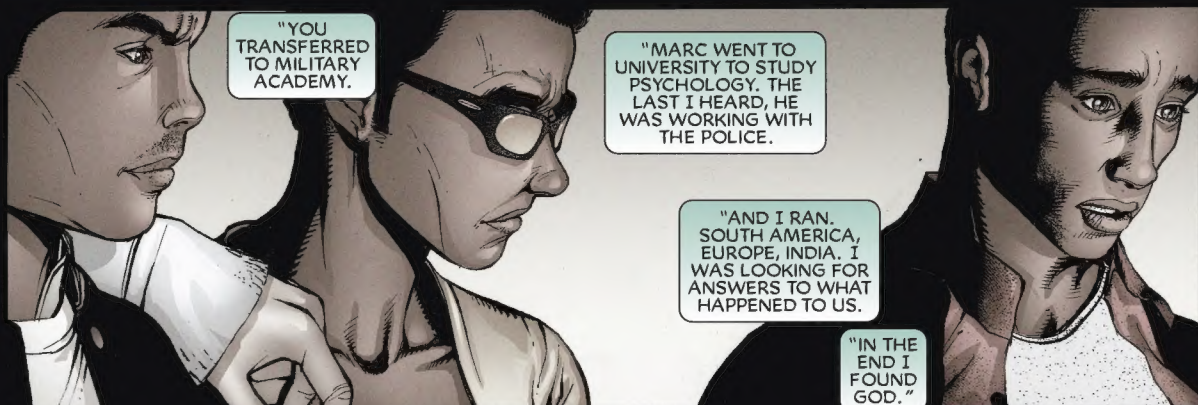
I'M SO
SORRY,
AL.

NEVER MIND
THAT. YOU'VE DONE
ENOUGH REPENTING
FOR ONE DAY. JUST TELL
ME, AFTER THAT
SUMMER, WHAT
HAPPENED TO OUR
PARENTS?

I-I
DON'T
KNOW.
LET ME
THINK.



"MALEFICK SENT US HOME. HE SAID HE'D TAKE CARE
OF THE BODY. I SUPPOSE HE DID. THERE WERE NEVER
ANY REPORTS OF THE WEASEL'S BODY BEING FOUND.



"YOU
TRANSFERRED
TO MILITARY
ACADEMY.

"MARC WENT TO
UNIVERSITY TO STUDY
PSYCHOLOGY. THE
LAST I HEARD, HE
WAS WORKING WITH
THE POLICE.

"AND I RAN.
SOUTH AMERICA,
EUROPE, INDIA. I
WAS LOOKING FOR
ANSWERS TO WHAT
HAPPENED TO US.

"IN THE
END I
FOUND
GOD."



I KNOW THAT! THAT'S NOT WHAT I ASKED.

I WANT TO KNOW WHAT HAPPENED TO OUR MOTHER AND FATHER.

I DON'T KNOW. I- I NEVER HEARD FROM THEM. I'VE NEVER THOUGHT ABOUT THEM. NOT ONCE IN ALL THESE YEARS.



MAMMON DID THIS TO US. HE BLOCKED ALL OUR MEMORIES. STOPPED US FROM EVEN THINKING ABOUT OUR CHILDHOOD OR OUR PARENTS. HE WANTED US TO FORGET THEY EVER EXISTED.

I'M GOING HOME, NYX. I HAVE TO FIND OUT WHAT HAPPENED TO THEM.



AB, ZAB, YOU TWO ARE GOING TO CLOSE THESE PORTALS.

PERMANENTLY.

THEN YOU ARE GOING TO WAIT RIGHT HERE.

YES, SIR.

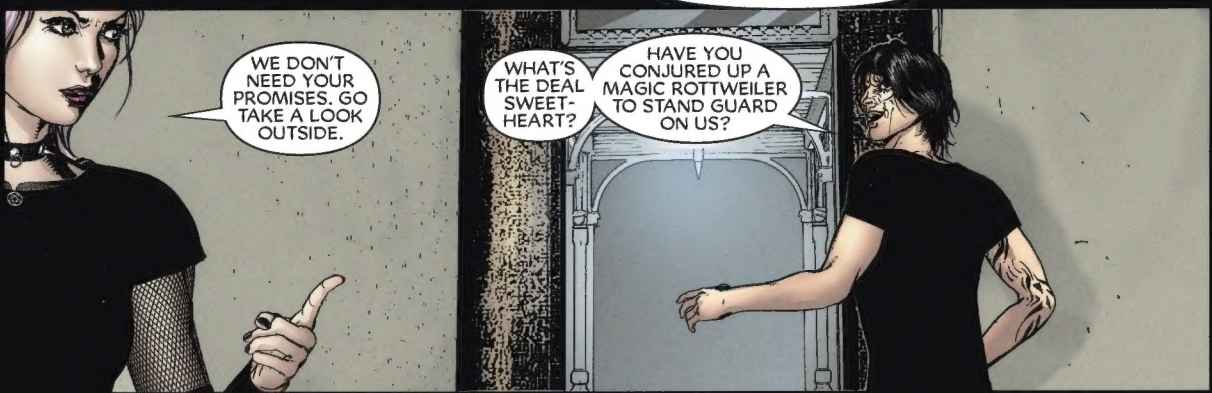


YOU WON'T GET INTO ANY MORE TROUBLE. IN FACT YOU WON'T SET FOOT OUTSIDE THIS BUILDING.

AS LONG AS IT TAKES.

O-KAY. THAT'S FOR HOW LONG EXACTLY?

SURE. WE CAN DO THAT. WE PROMISE, RIGHT, ZAB? CROSS OUR HEARTS.



WE DON'T NEED YOUR PROMISES. GO TAKE A LOOK OUTSIDE.

WHAT'S THE DEAL SWEET-HEART?

HAVE YOU CONJURED UP A MAGIC ROTTWEILER TO STAND GUARD ON US?



AIEEEEE



I'VE CAST
A BINDING
SPELL
AROUND THIS
ENTIRE
BUILDING.

YOU
DIDN'T HAVE TO
FRY MY FREAKING
ASS!

I'D
HAVE TAKEN
YOUR
WORD FOR
IT.



SOONER OR
LATER YOU WOULD HAVE
TRIED TO WALK OUT AND I
REALLY WANTED TO BE HERE
TO SEE YOUR FACE WHEN
THAT HAPPENED...

...SWEETHEART.



WILL YOU
COME WITH US,
RICHARD?

NO. I CAN'T.
THE IDEA OF
SEEING MOM AND
POP MAKES ME
FEEL ...

...LIKE
SOMETHING'S
SLIDING
SIDEWAYS IN
MY MIND.

I CAN'T
GO WITH
YOU.

IS THIS
SPELL OF
YOURS
GOING TO
STOP ME
LEAVING
HERE?

NO, IT ONLY
AFFECTS AB AND
ZAB. YOU CAN
COME AND GO AS
YOU LIKE.

JUST TAKE
CARE, RICHIE.
KEEP AN EYE ON
THOSE TWO.
THEY AREN'T TO
BE TRUSTED.

I'LL GET
BACK HERE
AS SOON AS
I CAN.



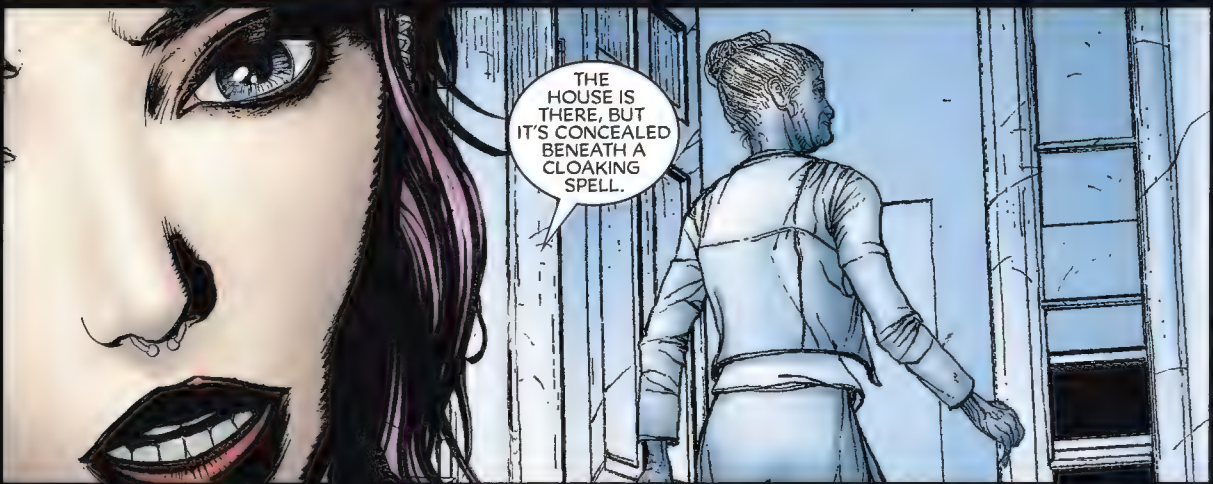
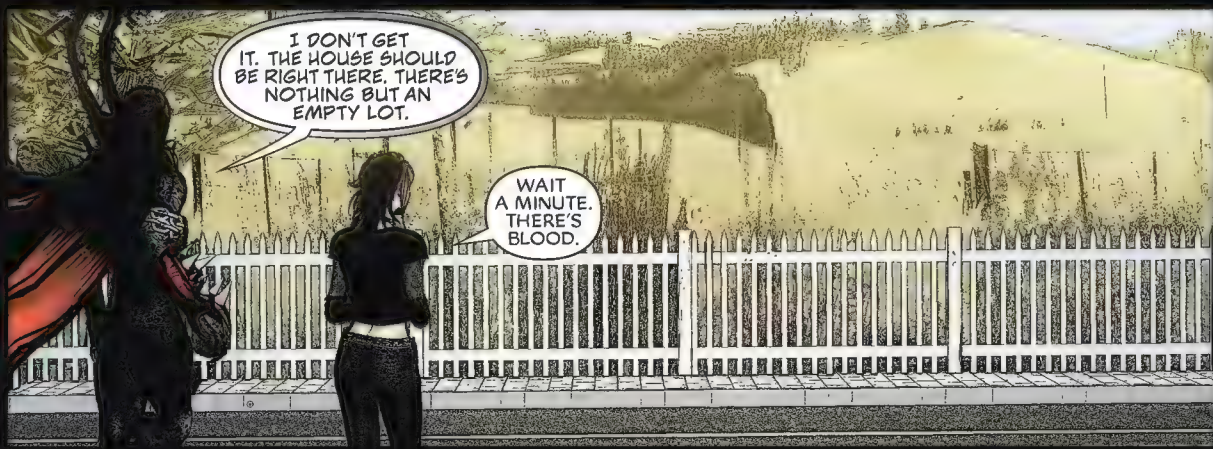
YOU REALLY
ARE AL, AREN'T
YOU? THIS ISN'T
SOME KIND OF
TEST.

YEAH, IT'S
ME, RICHIE.
THIS ISN'T A
TEST.



IS HE GOING TO
BE ALL RIGHT?

NO, I
DON'T
THINK
HE IS.

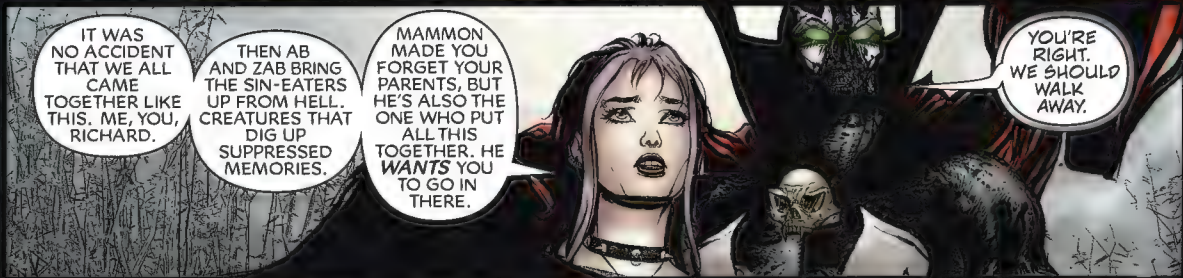




THEN I
GUESS WE
GO IN.



THERE
IT IS. THE SPELL
DISAPPEARED AS SOON
AS YOU CAME INTO
CONTACT WITH IT, AS
IF IT WAS WAITING
FOR YOU.



IT WAS
NO ACCIDENT
THAT WE ALL
CAME
TOGETHER LIKE
THIS. ME, YOU,
RICHARD.

THEN AB
AND ZAB BRING
THE SIN-EATERS
UP FROM HELL.
CREATURES THAT
DIG UP
SUPPRESSED
MEMORIES.

MAMMON
MADE YOU
FORGET YOUR
PARENTS, BUT
HE'S ALSO THE
ONE WHO PUT
ALL THIS
TOGETHER. HE
WANTS YOU
TO GO IN
THERE.

YOU'RE
RIGHT.
WE SHOULD
WALK
AWAY.



JUST BE
CAREFUL IS
ALL I'M-

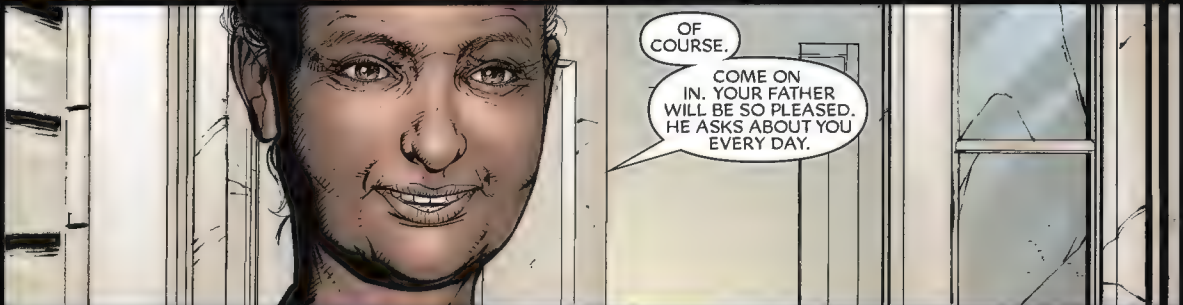
-HEY,
LOOK. IS THAT
HER?



HELLO,
AL.



YOU
RECOGNIZE
ME.



OF
COURSE.

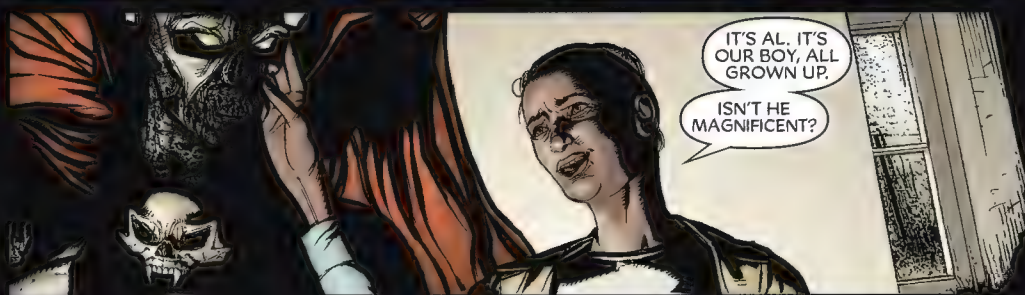
COME ON
IN. YOUR FATHER
WILL BE SO PLEASED.
HE ASKS ABOUT YOU
EVERY DAY.



BERNARD, LOOK WHO'S HERE.

NO!

OH PLEASE, GOD, NO!



IT'S AL. IT'S OUR BOY, ALL GROWN UP.

ISN'T HE MAGNIFICENT?

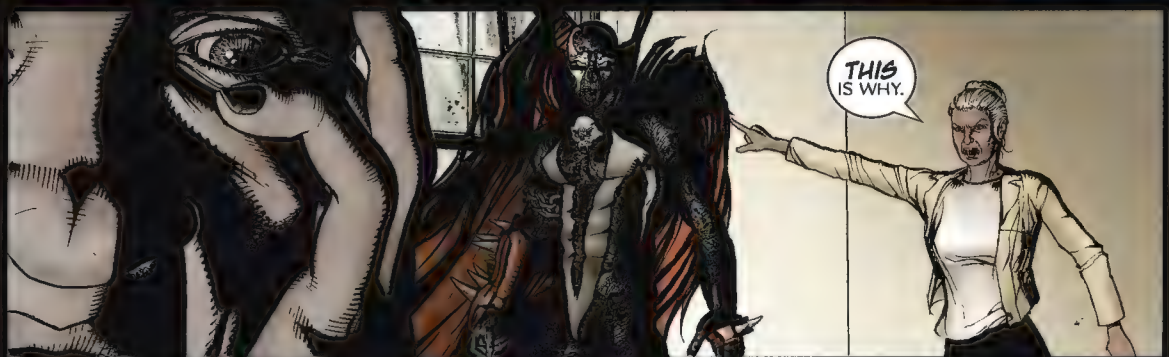


YOU DID THIS! THIS IS YOUR FAULT!

I COULD HAVE STOPPED THIS IF... IF...

IF WHAT? IF YOU'D HAD THE GUTS TO STAND UP TO ME FOR FIVE MINUTES?

POOR BERNARD. REMEMBER HOW YOU USED TO ASK ME WHY I WASTED MY TIME ON A LOSER LIKE YOU?



THIS IS WHY.



BERNARD, YOU'RE A FOOL. YOU ALWAYS WERE A FOOL. I MARRIED YOU BECAUSE MALEFICK TOLD ME TO MARRY YOU.



MALEFICK.
TELL
ME ABOUT
HIM.

WHY DID
YOU BRING
HIM TO THIS
HOUSE?

WHY
DID YOU LET
HIM POISON
US?



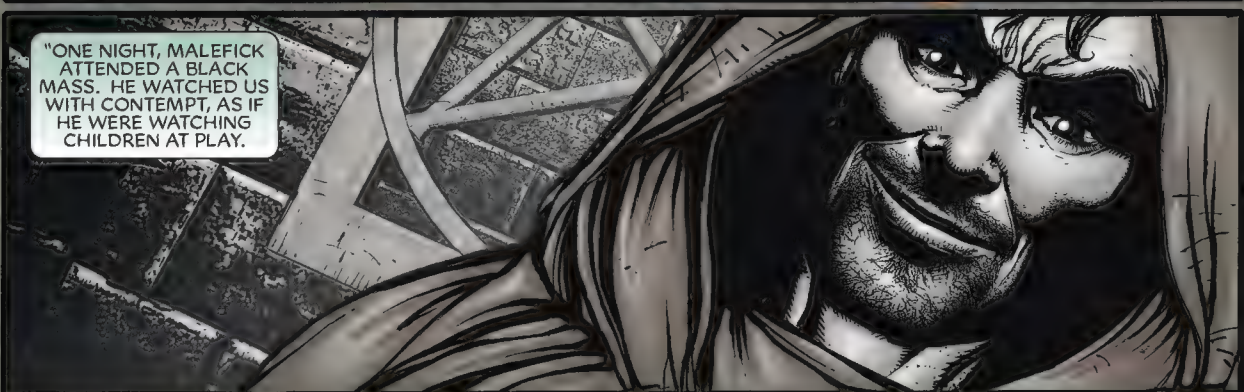
POISON
YOU?

HE'S THE
ONE WHO
RAISED YOU UP
ABOVE THE
MEDIOCRITY
OF THE HUMAN
RACE.

"I MET MALEFICK WHEN I WAS TWENTY-ONE. I WAS STUDYING COMPARATIVE RELIGION AT WESTERN MICHIGAN. I HAD A BOYFRIEND WHO INVITED ME TO JOIN A SATANIST GROUP, THE CHURCH OF LUCIFER.



"ONE NIGHT, MALEFICK ATTENDED A BLACK MASS. HE WATCHED US WITH CONTEMPT, AS IF HE WERE WATCHING CHILDREN AT PLAY.



"WHEN HE LOOKED AT ME THERE WAS A CONNECTION BETWEEN US. IT FELT LIKE FIRE IN MY BLOOD."



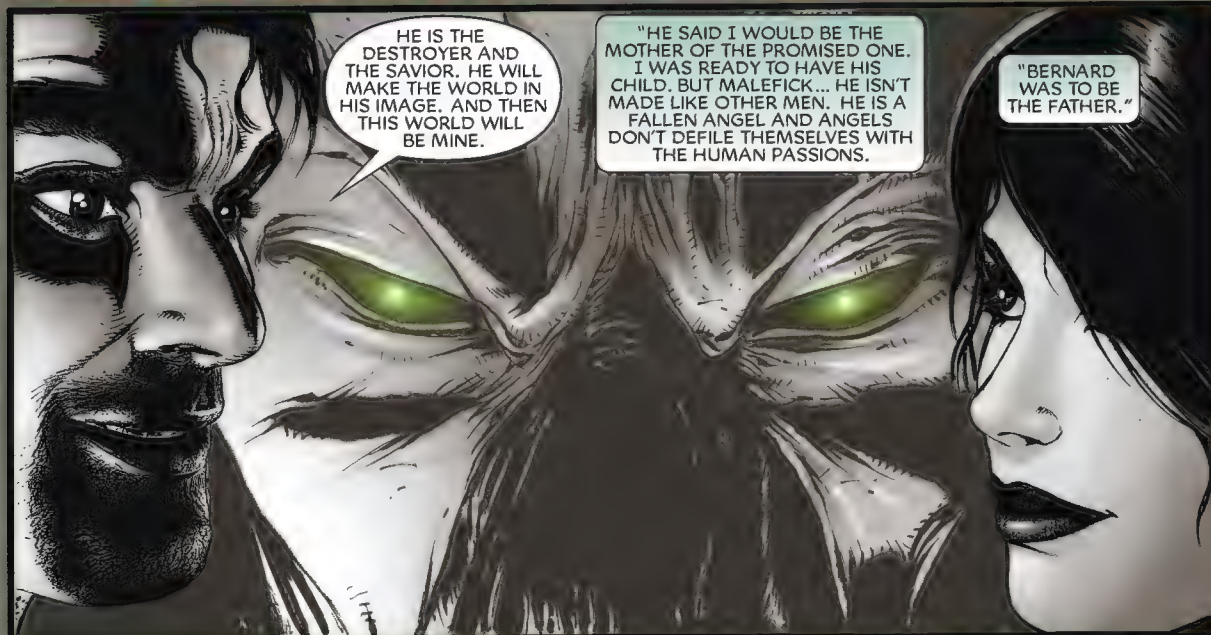
"WHEN HE LEFT,
I FOLLOWED HIM
WITHOUT A WORD
BEING SPOKEN
BETWEEN US."



"IN THE DAYS
AND MONTHS
THAT FOLLOWED,
HE SHOWED ME
TRUE POWER.
HE SUMMONED
DEMONS FROM
HELL."

"AND HE TOLD
ME OF THE HELLSPAWN,
CHOSEN FROM AMONG
HUMANKIND TO LEAD THE
HOSTS OF THE UNDER-
WORLD TO WAR."

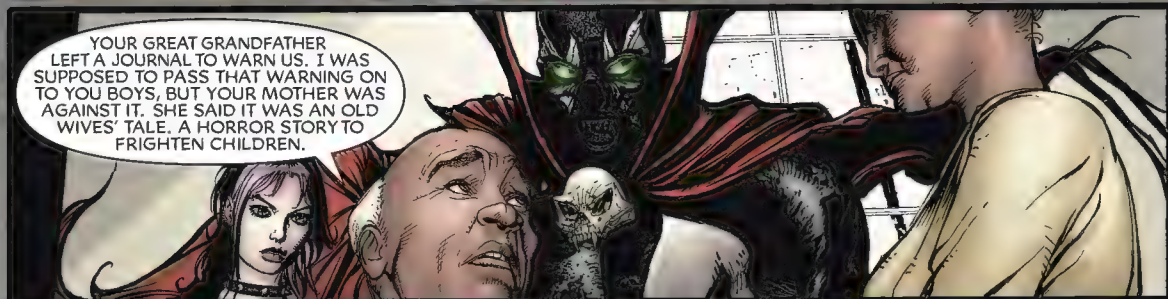
"THERE HAVE BEEN
MANY GENERATIONS
OF HELLSPAWN, BUT
MALEFICK KNEW THAT
THERE WAS ONE
COMING, WHO WOULD
BE FAR GREATER THAN
THOSE WHO HAD
COME BEFORE."

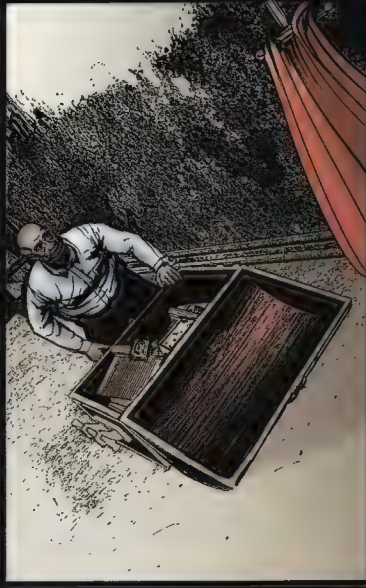
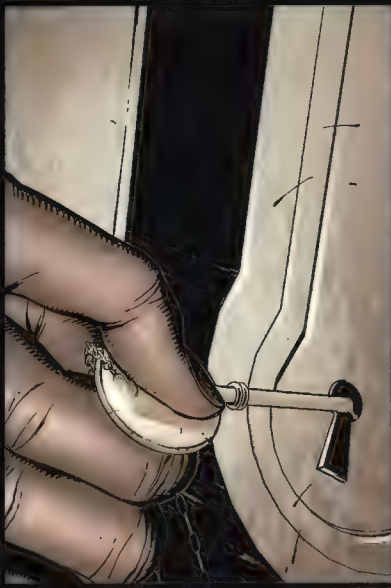


HE IS THE
DESTROYER AND
THE SAVIOR. HE WILL
MAKE THE WORLD IN
HIS IMAGE. AND THEN
THIS WORLD WILL
BE MINE.

"HE SAID I WOULD BE THE
MOTHER OF THE PROMISED ONE.
I WAS READY TO HAVE HIS
CHILD. BUT MALEFICK... HE ISN'T
MADE LIKE OTHER MEN. HE IS A
FALLEN ANGEL AND ANGELS
DON'T DEFILE THEMSELVES WITH
THE HUMAN PASSIONS."

"BERNARD
WAS TO BE
THE FATHER."









THE HELL HOUSE.
NORMAL,
ILLINOIS.

WHERE THE HELL 'YA BEEN?
THREE FRICKING HOURS
YOU'VE BEEN GONE.
WE'RE STARVING
IN HERE.

YOU'RE DEMONS.
YOU DON'T
HAVE TO EAT.



OKAY SMARTASS,
YOU'RE RIGHT. WE
DON'T HAVE TO EAT.
WE DON'T HAVE TO
DRINK BEER.



WE DON'T
HAVE TO
KILL
THINGS!!

ZAP!



YOU SHOULD
BE NICE TO ME. I
COULD JUST WALK
AWAY AND LEAVE
YOU HERE.

OUCH!
OUCH!
OUCH!
BASTARD!!



HE'S
GONNA PAY
FOR THAT.

WHERE'S
THE
PORN?

WHAT'S THIS?
THE TARKOVSKY
COLLECTION?

I HATE
RUSSIAN PORN.
SKANKY
CHICKS. LOUSY
DECOR.

DUDE. I KNOW
WHAT YOU'RE SAYING.
IT'S DOWNRIGHT DEPRESSING. JUST
LOOKING AT THAT COMMIE ERA
WALLPAPER MAKES ME WANT
TO KILL MYSELF.

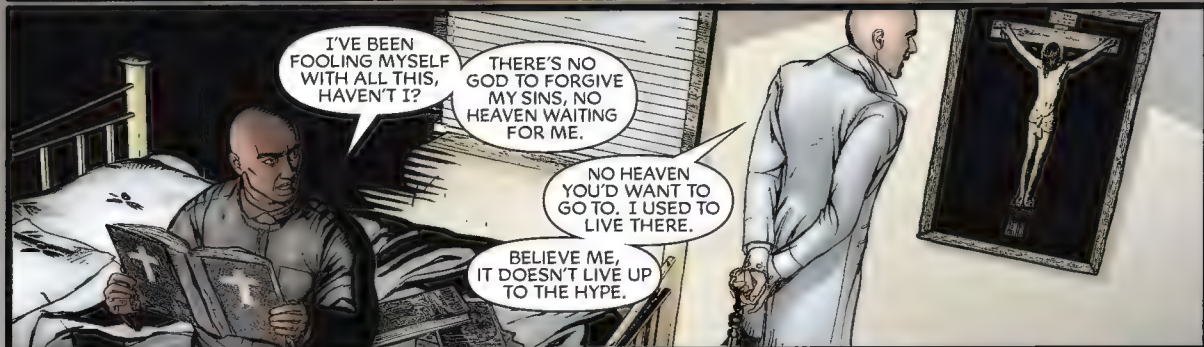


HELLO, RICHARD.

MISTER MALEFICK. IT'S BEEN A LONG TIME.



THAT DEPENDS ON YOUR PERSPECTIVE.

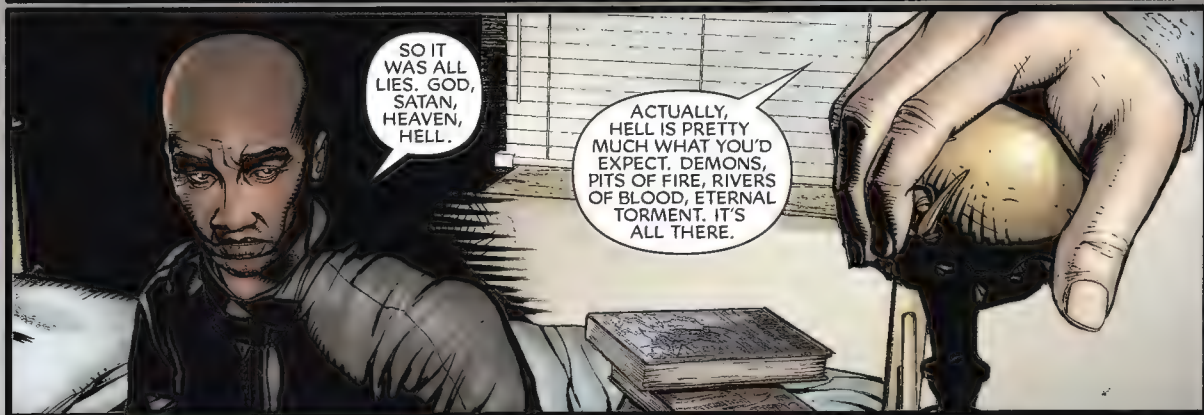


I'VE BEEN FOOLING MYSELF WITH ALL THIS, HAVEN'T I?

THERE'S NO GOD TO FORGIVE MY SINS, NO HEAVEN WAITING FOR ME.

NO HEAVEN YOU'D WANT TO GO TO. I USED TO LIVE THERE.

BELIEVE ME, IT DOESN'T LIVE UP TO THE HYPE.



SO IT WAS ALL LIES. GOD, SATAN, HEAVEN, HELL.

ACTUALLY, HELL IS PRETTY MUCH WHAT YOU'D EXPECT. DEMONS, PITS OF FIRE, RIVERS OF BLOOD, ETERNAL TORMENT. IT'S ALL THERE.



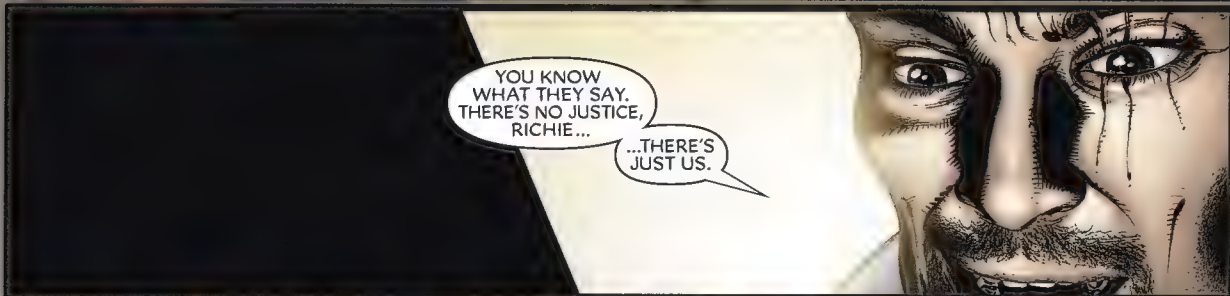
I BELONG THERE.

YES, YOU DO.



THERE WAS NEVER ANY REDEMPTION FOR ME.

I TRIED. ALL THESE YEARS, WARNING PEOPLE. I THOUGHT IF I SAVED ENOUGH OF THEM...



YOU KNOW WHAT THEY SAY. THERE'S NO JUSTICE, RICHIE...

...THERE'S JUST US.



COME ON. I'LL TAKE YOU DOWN.

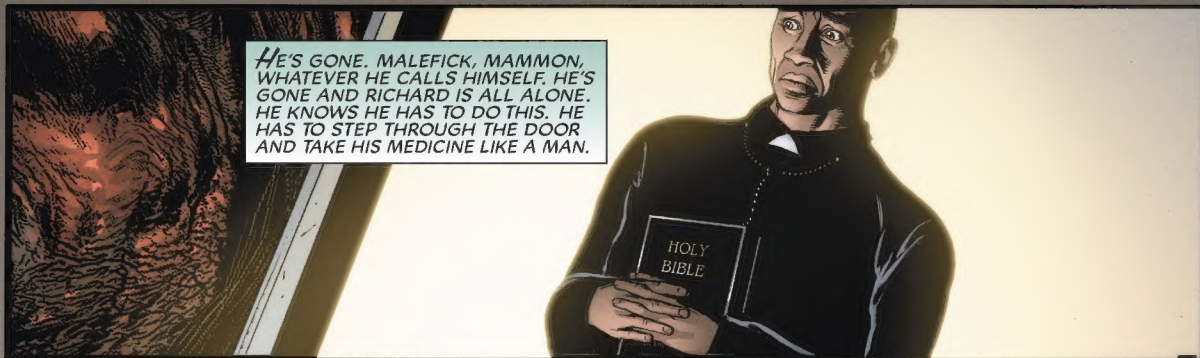


I THOUGHT THEY GOT RID OF THESE DOORS.

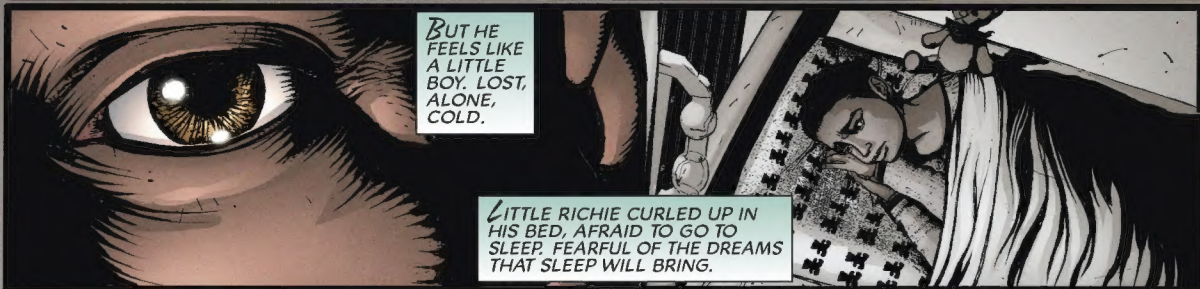
NOT THIS ONE. THIS DOOR WAS INTENDED ONLY FOR YOU.



I'LL BE SEEING YOU, RICHIE.

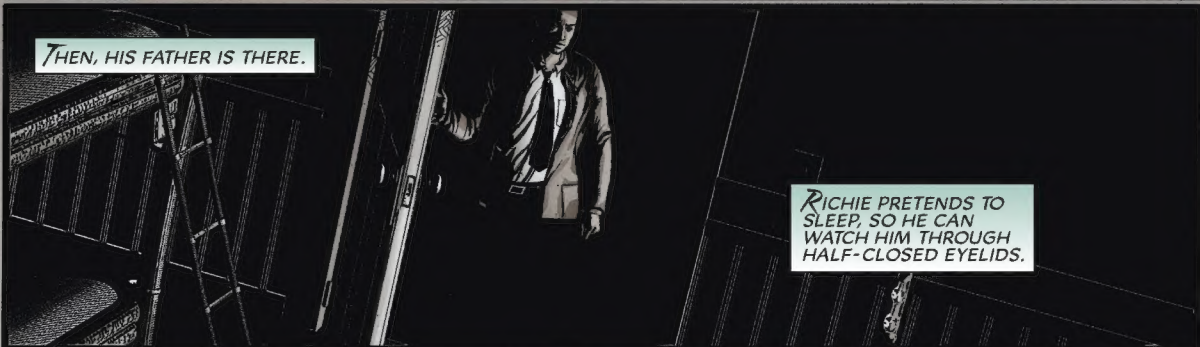


HE'S GONE. MALEFICK, MAMMON, WHATEVER HE CALLS HIMSELF. HE'S GONE AND RICHARD IS ALL ALONE. HE KNOWS HE HAS TO DO THIS. HE HAS TO STEP THROUGH THE DOOR AND TAKE HIS MEDICINE LIKE A MAN.



BUT HE FEELS LIKE A LITTLE BOY. LOST, ALONE, COLD.

LITTLE RICHIE CURLED UP IN HIS BED, AFRAID TO GO TO SLEEP. FEARFUL OF THE DREAMS THAT SLEEP WILL BRING.



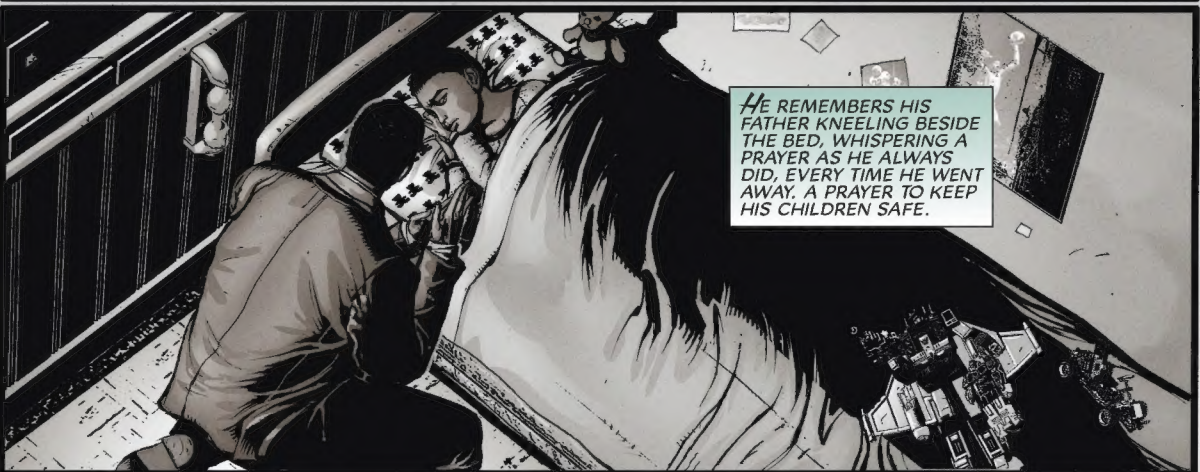
THEN, HIS FATHER IS THERE.

RICHIE PRETENDS TO SLEEP, SO HE CAN WATCH HIM THROUGH HALF-CLOSED EYELIDS.



HE SEES THE TEARS RUNNING DOWN HIS FATHER'S CHEEKS.

HE DIDN'T KNOW UNTIL THEN THAT GROWN-UPS CRY.



HE REMEMBERS HIS FATHER KNEELING BESIDE THE BED, WHISPERING A PRAYER AS HE ALWAYS DID. EVERY TIME HE WENT AWAY, A PRAYER TO KEEP HIS CHILDREN SAFE.

EVEN IF THE WORDS ARE LIES, THEY GIVE RICHARD THE COURAGE HE NEEDS TO TAKE THE FIRST STEP.



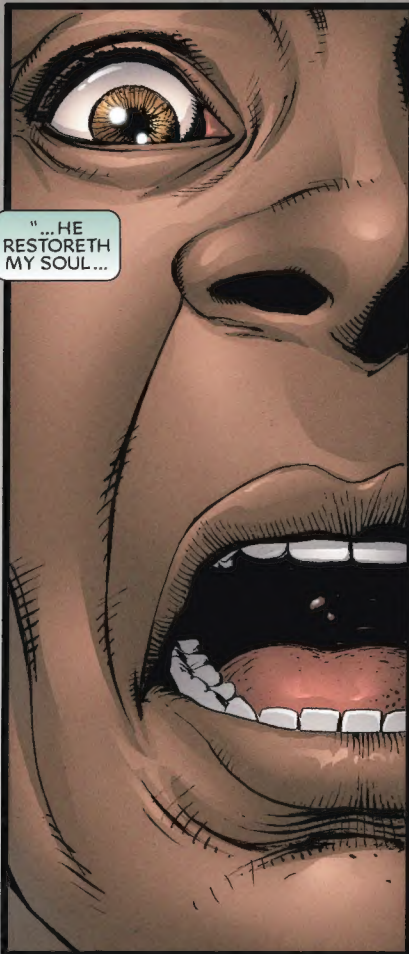
"THE LORD IS MY SHEPHERD; I SHALL NOT WANT..."



"...HE MAKETH ME TO LIE DOWN IN GREEN PASTURES..."



"...HE LEADETH ME BESIDE THE STILL WATERS..."



"...HE RESTORETH MY SOUL..."



"...HE LEADETH ME IN THE PATHS OF RIGHTEOUSNESS FOR HIS NAME'S SAKE..."



"...YEA, THOUGH I WALK THROUGH THE VALLEY OF THE SHADOW OF DEATH, I WILL FEAR NO EVIL..."



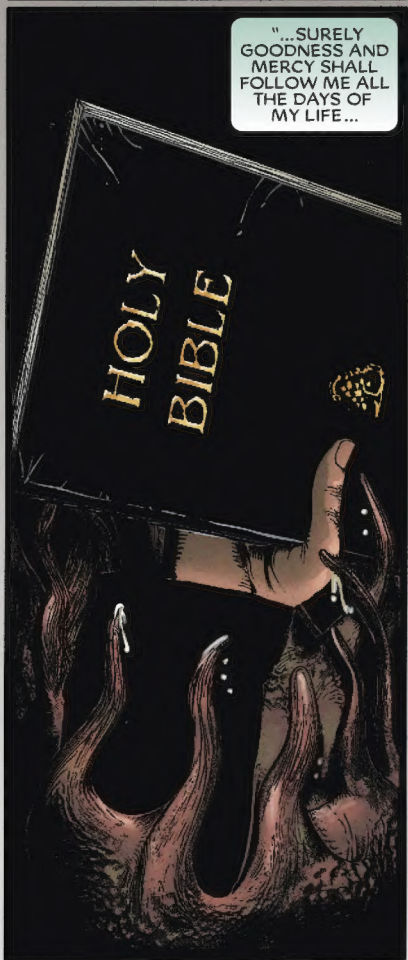
"...FOR THOU
ART WITH ME;
THY ROD AND
THY STAFF
THEY COMFORT
ME..."



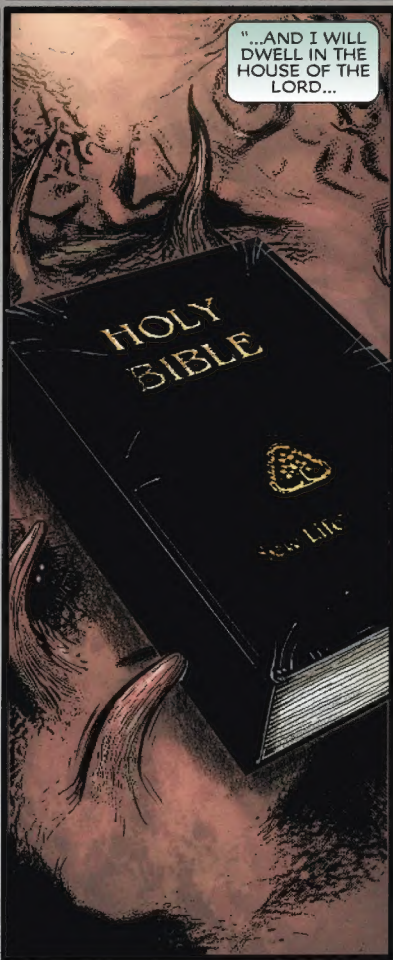
"...THOU PREPAREST
A TABLE BEFORE ME
IN THE PRESENCE OF
MINE ENEMIES..."



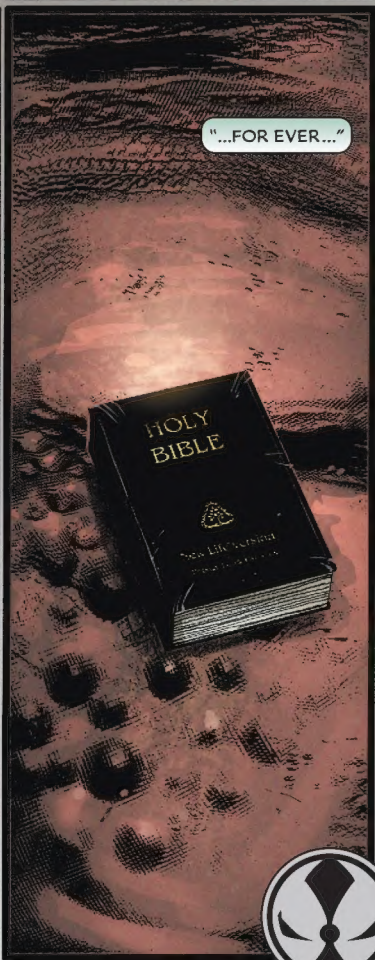
"...THOU ANOINTEST
MY HEAD WITH OIL:
MY CUP RUNNETH
OVER..."



"...SURELY
GOODNESS AND
MERCY SHALL
FOLLOW ME ALL
THE DAYS OF
MY LIFE..."



"...AND I WILL
DWELL IN THE
HOUSE OF THE
LORD..."



"...FOR EVER..."





Tyrant
Lizard
King

EMPIRE